New England
Deaconess
Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

pulse

VOLUME 25 — NUMBER 3 DECEMBER 1971

The Song Of Christmas

The Christmas season can be hectic and confusing; children become disturbed by seeing too many santas, adults become distressed when they think of the January bills. The days before Christmas seem to fly by and there are never enough hours in the day. Everyone feels the spirit of the Christmas rush; too few feel the spirit of Christmas peace.

Yet in all of this rush there is a song as haunting as a carol in the silent night. It tells of peace, it tells of trust in man, and it tells of faith in God even in a time of mystery and suffering. Doctors and nurses hear the song of hope in the beating heart, feel it in the faintest pulse, and base their care on that hope day and night. Others on our staff sense the song of Christmas that can be sung in the soft words of assurance and in the hand that helps. And patients, more than all the rest of us, are receptive to the song we humbly try to sing. From their eyes, if not from their lips, we learn of faith and trust. With these we can meet the God of Christmas.

The administrative staff and the New England Deaconess Hospital Board of Trustees express to every member of the Deaconess family their deep appreciation for your many contributions to our patients' welfare. May this holiday season bring each one of you its full measure of joy.

R. D. Lowry, *Executive Vice President*

Miss Mathers named to new position

In October, Miss Joan E. Mathers was promoted as assistant director of employee relations. She had previously served as assistant to the employee relations director. Miss Mathers has worked at the Deaconess in various capacities since October 1967 with most of her time being devoted to the personnel department.

With interviewing prospective employees as her principle responsibility, Miss Mathers began her Deaconess career as assistant in the personnel department. In August 1969, she was assigned to an extensive nurse recruiting project. Miss Mathers served as director of nurse recruitment until July 1970, when she left the department to become assistant training coordinator. She ~~reminded~~ there for about five months and in January 1970 returned to personnel as assistant to the director.

In her newly appointed position, Miss Mathers supervises the following divisions within the department: employment and nurse recruiting, job study, benefits and records, and employee orientation. She also undertakes special projects when need dictates. Nine employees report to Miss Mathers.

Like her employment record at NEDH, Miss Mathers' college career was marked by various moves. She entered Simmons College in 1960 as a nursing student and two years later she went to Cornell University New York Hospital School of Nursing.

After deciding against a nursing career, Miss Mathers worked at the New England Medical Center Hospital in the medical record department until the fall of 1964. She then returned to Simmons College School of Publication. In 1966, she graduated with high distinction from the

Miss Joan Mathers

school. Before joining the Deaconess, she was public relations assistant at the United Community Services, Boston.

Raised in Belmont, Mass., Miss Mathers now lives in an apartment in Waltham. She enjoys reading, traveling and visiting museums.

JUST A THOUGHT:

"Next to love, sympathy is the divinest passion of the heart."

Edmund Burke

Personnel needs correct addresses

Income tax time is just around the corner and in order to expedite filing of federal and state tax returns, each employee must be sure the personnel department (Baker I) has his or her correct home address in their files. Again this year, the Wage and Tax Statements (W-2 Forms) will be mailed directly to the individual employee's home. Misaddressed envelopes will be returned to the personnel office and will cause a delay in the affected employee's receipt of the W-2 Form.

Alpha Credit Union holds annual meeting

Two important meetings of the Alpha Credit Union were recently held at the hospital. The first was an annual meeting of the credit union members on November 18 in Joslin Auditorium. At the meeting, members learned that on secured loans, they can now borrow up to $4,000 — an increase of $500 in comparison to last year. The maximum amount for unsecured loans remains $1,000 if the loan is co-signed, and $500 if only the member signs the loan.

The nominating committee proposed that the five directors whose three-year terms expired this year be re-elected for another three years. Since there were no other nominations, a single ballot was cast to re-elect the following directors: Mr. Edward Carrington, central supply; Miss Natalie E. Fossati, secretary to Dr. Shields Warren; Mr. Gerald K. Frederickson, administrator of Joslin Clinic; Mr. Allen Mitchell, housekeeping; and Mr. Charles F. Schraub, pharmacy services manager.

Miss Beth Murphy, supervisor of the records and benefits division in personnel, was elected to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Dean Annis, controller. There are 15 directors of the Alpha Credit Union. Five are elected every year to serve for a three-year period.

On December 7, the second important meeting for the Alpha Credit Union took place when the board of directors met to elect their officers. The slate was accepted and the following officers were elected: Mr. William Branson, president; Miss Marjorie Pond, vice president; Mr. William Wambolt, treasurer; and Miss Natalie Fossati, clerk.

Alpha Credit Union members will earn a 5% interest on their shares for the dividend period ending October 31, 1971. The members will receive their first quarterly statement in early January.

Medical record dept. returns to Central I

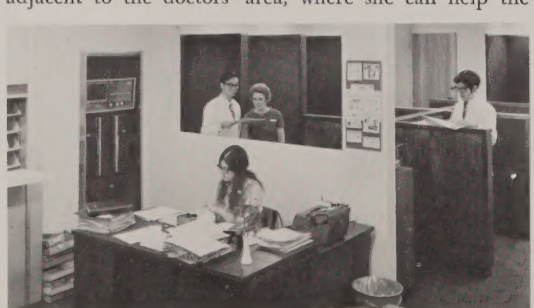
After eight months in temporary quarters on Deaconess 2 and three years and nine months of commotion caused by construction noise and confusion, the **medical record department** settled into its renovated Central I headquarters during the second week of December. The final pieces of the wall-to-wall carpet were installed just prior to the department's physical move.

The bright and spacious medical record department is divided into three task areas. At the end furthest from the entrance to the department is a room for five medical transcribers and their supervisor, Mrs. Rose Brooks. The location gives the workers a quiet atmosphere in which they can more efficiently complete their transcription responsibilities.

Next to the transcribers' room is the office for Miss Louise Seymour, director of the department. From her office Miss Seymour can observe the medical record storage stacks and the adjacent room where medical record analysts work.

The front of the renovated medical record department contains a special area for the use of doctors. It has five dictating booths and four research carrels. For the convenience of Deaconess doctors, the area offers a quiet atmosphere conducive to concentration. Miss Rose Martin, senior librarian, is stationed at a reception desk adjacent to the doctors' area, where she can help the physicians find records, and from where she supervises three other medical record employees.

Professional movers transfer medical records from Deaconess 2 to the department's renovated quarters on Central 1. Miss Louise Seymour, medical record department head (ctr.), supervises the transfer while Miss Sandra Simi, record analyst (right), researches some information.



The doctors' research and dictation area contains separate booths to promote concentration. Miss Rose Martin, senior librarian, gives a requested record to Dr. Tadao Suzuki, Joslin fellow, while Dr. Alberto Solano, Joslin fellow, studies another record. In the foreground Mrs. Doris Bange, clerk-typist, does some filing.

The **beauty shop** settled into its new Deaconess 3 location on December 6. Like the medical record department, the beauty shop has undergone many adjustments since construction began at the Deaconess. Originally on the Baker roof, the shop moved to Deaconess 4 in the summer of 1970. The permanent shop on Deaconess 3 is equipped with two sinks, hair driers and a special comb-wash and storage room. It is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Another renovation project underway is the **Deaconess 3 classroom.** Now that obstructing piping has been relocated, the jutting walls can be straightened to create a larger, more effective teaching area. After the classroom is completed, it will be equipped with an optional dividing wall to allow for the simultaneous use of the area by two classes.

Extensive renovations in rooms off of the corridor connecting Deaconess I and Central I are currently in process. Adjacent to the waiting room for the patient service department, the rooms will offer **admissions laboratory services** for urine and blood analysis and ECG tests as needed. It will be equipped with a small Coulter Counter Model-S that can produce results from seven blood tests on one sample of patient blood in just 40 seconds.

Reverence and anticipation characterize Christmas season around the world

Christmas traditions in the United States may vary by region and by family preference, but there are specific customs that are notable on a national scale: the nativity scenes displayed by churches and in many private homes; the pine tree decorated with twinkly lights and colorful bulbs; the wreath of boughs set off with a red ribbon and perhaps some pine cones or candies; and the jolly Santa Claus suited in red and white. In addition to these tangible forms of Christmas cheer, there is the merriment and jostling in stores across the country as people prepare to exchange gifts with their family and friends as a symbolic recognition of the birth of the Christ Child 1,971 years ago.

It is the spiritual quality and excited anticipation of Christmas Day that make the holiday season a universal celebration for Christians around the world. Many Deaconess employees, particularly doctors who are in the training programs, come from other nations. Through the customs, as explained by some of these medical professionals, Christmas takes on a tone of international reverence and celebration.

In Northern Germany, a special calendar helps prepare the people for Christmas Day. Tiny doors or windows cover the spaces for the first 24 days of the month. Each day, a door is lifted by a member of the family and a picture pertinent to Christmas; an angel, a mother baking breads, a snowflake, or a child writing a list of wishes; is uncovered. Sometimes on the larger calendars, a piece of candy or a little trinket might be hidden behind the doors. On December 24, the largest and most beautiful door is opened and behind it is something related to the holy family.

"In some families, there are little packages to be opened one a day for the 24 days before Christmas," explains Dr. Barbara Kraus, Joslin fellow from Germany. "But, there is always some type of preparatory activity during those 24 days. And there are always at least two weeks of baking to prepare Christmas pies, breads, pastries and cookies!"

An Adventkranz or Christmas wreath is another custom in Germany. Constructed of pine boughs, the wreaths are placed in predominant places in churches, schools and homes. They are decorated with four candles and on each of the four Sundays of Advent, a candle is lit on the wreath. Frequently these wreaths are not placed on a table but are suspended from the ceiling. In private homes, they are often hung over the dining room table.

Both in Germany and in Hungary, homeland of Dr. Steven Draskoczy, first year medical resident, December 6 is a special day when Claus (or Nikolaus in Germany) comes to give little goodies to the children. In Germany, Nikolaus has a rough counterpart, Krampus, who visits the homes of naughty children on December 5. The evening of the 5th, the children polish their shoes and place them in front of a window or door. During the night Claus fills the shoes with nuts, candies and fruits.

Decorating a Christmas tree, complete with candles that typify their native countries, are (l. - r.) Miss Catherina Tham, R.N. from Sweden; Dr. Barbara Kraus, Joslin fellow from Germany; and Dr. Steven Draskoczy, first year resident from Hungary.

Another German tradition is that Nikolaus, dressed in his international suit of red and white, personally comes to visit the children on December 6. The children prepare for his visit by writing little poems or creating something to please him. In turn, he reminds them to be nice and then goes off to visit another family.

In Germany, Hungary and Sweden, Christmas is usually celebrated on December 24th when the fresh pine tree is set up in a special room and decorated with holiday cheer. In each of the three countries, candles frequently light the tree in place of the Americanized electric bulbs. Apples, stars and glitter, cookies and candies, and miniature national flags characterize the Swedish tree.

Many Swedish families gather during the afternoon to write witty poems that accompany most of the presents. It is also common in both Sweden and Germany for the parents to decorate the tree as a surprise for the children. In both countries, after a festive meal the children wait outside the Christmas tree room while the parents light the candles on the tree. When the children joyously enter the room there is dancing and merriment.

According to Miss Catherina Tham, RN on Palmer 4 who comes from Sweden, "At this time in my family, my father reads the Christmas story from the Bible and then he quietly exits from the family circle. Within minutes, Santa Claus appears carrying gifts in a bag or basket. As he distributes gifts, he reads the poems written that afternoon. At 11:30 p.m. the family goes to church."

On December 13, the Day of Light in Sweden, a woman clothed in white and wearing a wreath of candles in her hair visits everyone at 5 a.m. Since this is the darkest day of the year, Lucia — as the woman is called, represents the coming light. She visits private homes, factories, hospitals and any other place where people are gathered at that early hour. Lucia frequently is accompanied by a female choir dressed in long white gowns. Everyone they visit receives gingerbread and coffee, songs are sung and a Swedish drink, glög, is served.

In Greece the major religion is Greek Orthodox. The Greek people decorate their homes with a tree adorned with electric lights and other ornaments. Gifts are exchanged for several days, from December 21 to January 1. December 24 is a day of celebration with friends and is highlighted with dancing and fireworks. Christmas Day is a time when families gather together.

When Dr. Nikilaos Katsilambros, Joslin fellow from Greece, was asked about Christmas in his homeland, he replied, "There is not really much difference. The greatest religious holy day in Greece is Easter. At that time, one often goes to the country and prepares a feast of lamb on a hand rotisserie over an open fire. It is always a family day, but a grouping of many families is frequently found at these celebrations." Many Greek dances and a gala display of fireworks predominate the activities after the lamb feast.

Buddhism is the major religion in Japan and Thailand, the respective native countries of Dr. Mitsuo Kitahara, first year medical resident, and Dr. Thep Himathongkam, second year medical resident. Neither coun-

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While looking at Christmas decorations at the traditional Friends of the Deaconess Bazaar, Dr. Alberto Solano left), Joslin fellow from Mexico, explains the use of a piñata to Dr. Arturo Rolla, second year resident from Argentina, and Dr. Thep Himathongkam, second year resident from Thailand.

1972 begins internationally at the stroke of midnight

New Year's Eve is a time for looking back and for looking forward; a time for gaity. Traditions within this country bring to mind happy parties with friends or family. At the stroke of midnight people across the nation watch as the shimmering bulb in New York City's Time Square drops to the ground. They sing "Auld Lang Syne" and greet each other with wishes for a Happy New Year.

Throughout the world, people celebrate New Year's Eve in traditional ways. City officials in Greece extinguish the lights for two seconds in recognition of the new year's arrival. The men in Mexico go into the back yards of their homes and shoot their guns for several minutes. Although it is prohibited by law because of the danger, the custom is pursued by tradition-oriented Mexicans.

In Japan, New Year's Eve is celebrated as a family event. Japanese noodles are served at midnight and wishes of good cheer are exchanged. On a date close to December 31, adults gather for a special party to say farewell to the out-going year.

Church bells ring throughout Germany and Sweden at midnight to welcome in the new year. In Sweden, the radio stations broadcast the names of the churches as they, in turn, chime a welcome to the new year.

A New Year's Eve tradition for many German families involves a game of prediction called *Bleigiessen*. Lead is melted in a pot and then plunged into cold water. With this action the lead becomes a solid and takes on a specific shape. Whoever plunges the lead into the cold water then holds a candle behind the shape and a shadow forms on the wall. The object seen in the shadow foretells

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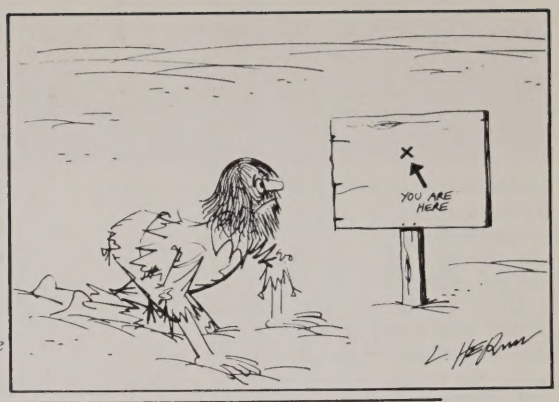
NEDH Corporators attend annual meeting

The annual meeting of the NEDH Corporation was held November 16 in the Riverview Restaurant, 110 Francis Street. Re-elected to serve in their current offices were: Francis W. Capper, chairman of the board; Laurens MacLure, president; James F. Farr, vice president; C. Vincent Vappi, vice president; Henry S. Rogerson, treasurer; and James T. Mountz, clerk.

With Chairman of the Board Francis Capper presiding, reports were given by: Mr. MacLure, president of the corporation; Dr. Robert Bradley, president of the Medical Administrative Board; Mrs. Lauriston Ward Jr., president of the Friends of the Deaconess; Mr. Richard E. Lee, director of the hospital; and Mr. R. D. Lowry, executive vice president of NEDH.

Fifteen new members of the corporation were also elected at the annual meeting: Reverend Ernest R. Drake, M. Gordon Ehrlich, Reverend S. Blake Ellis, Thomas J. Flatley, Reverend Leslie W. Howland, Thomas Jackson, John F. Keane, Robert W. Maynard, Mrs. George Rohrbough, F. Thayer Sanderson, Robert S. Swain Jr., Harvey Thomas, Mrs. Lauriston Ward Jr., Hillard Welch and Dr. C. Dale White.

Mr. Francis Capper, (sitting ctr.) chairman of the NEDH Board of Trustees, and Mr. Laurens MacLure, (sitting r.) president of the NEDH Corporation, pose with four of five newly elected trustees. They are: (standing l. - r.) John D. Hamilton Jr., William B. Frothingham Jr., M. Colyer Crum and (sitting l.) John H. Meyer. Not pictured is Marvin G. Schorr.



Courtesy of *Medical Tribune*

The stroke of midnight . . .

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the future for the coming year. For example, if the shadow looks like a ship, it may mean that the person will travel during the new year.

Customs of prediction during New Year's celebrations do not exist as such specific actions in the United States. But most people think about the year gone by and wonder what the coming year holds for them. A tradition followed in the United States is the formation of New Year's resolutions.

The desired results of some resolutions are tangibles such as a new hobby of carpentry, skiing, sewing or candle making. Other resolutions may result in actions such as rising in the morning when the alarm clock clangs its greeting.

In most people there is a fear to seek new opportunities or a tendency to procrastinate. A New Year's resolution can be a direct link to the fulfillment of more interesting leisure-time activities, or better work and social opportunities.

For a limited number of people who decide job improvement is their New Year's resolution, the Deaconess Hospital provides some training programs. In addition to the residency and fellowship programs for doctors, and the School of Nursing and the School of Medical Technology, classes are currently in progress for operating room technicians, respiratory therapy technicians and laboratory technicians. Now while you are still enthused about career improvement — is the time to look into these training programs.

Harris Hall open house attracts record number of prospective students

Over 200 high school students attended NEDH School of Nursing Open House at Harris Hall to see what life is like for nursing students at the Deaconess. On November 11, interested high schoolers came from as far south as Newport, R. I., and Dennis on Cape Cod and from as far west as the Springfield area.

"This year was the largest turnout we've ever had for our afternoon open house," explains Miss Anne Howard, admissions counselor. "Our students made the whole afternoon a success. Most of the junior class was on hand to give tours and a number of the first year students volunteered to help."

After the high school students registered and finished their refreshments of chocolate covered ice cream, they divided into groups of five and were ushered through the afternoon's activities by both a junior and a first year student. The low ratio of nursing students to high school students personalized the open house and allowed for much informal discussion.

Each group rotated its activities so that there was never a mass of people in any one area. Tours of Harris Hall and the Deaconess were conducted; slides of the hospital were shown and an informal talk was given on a nursing student's life; and nursing technique demonstrations were simultaneously in action.

Demonstrations provided the opportunity for interested high school students to see actual nursing procedures. Included in the nursing care demonstrations were: range of motion and precaution techniques, ace bandage applications, sterile dressings and blood pressures.

As the visitors left Harris Hall, they were given a token to remind them of their afternoon at the Deaconess — a paper replica of an NEDH nurse's cap imprinted with the message: "If the cap fits wear it."

Chapel sponsors caroling and Sunday services

Sunday religious services are offered in the Arthur T. Dooley Memorial Chapel for employees, ambulatory patients and visitors. Mass is celebrated at 9:00 a.m. and a Protestant service is at 10:00 a.m. Services began on a weekly basis on November 7.

Organized by the chaplain's office and the personnel department, the **annual carol sing** for Deaconess employees will be held December 23. Caroling will begin shortly after 12 noon in Central lobby. The group will proceed to the nursing units where they will share the Christmas carols with the patients.

Friends of the Deaconess hold annual bazaar

LEFT PHOTOGRAPH: Mrs. George I. Rohrbough (left) and Mrs. James T. Mountz, co-chairmen of the 1971 Friends of the Deaconess Christmas Bazaar, place the final ornaments on a tree displayed at the December 3 event.

RIGHT PHOTOGRAPH: Two Friends of the Deaconess who worked at the Christmas bazaar, (left) Mrs. Robert Stevenson and Mrs. Jackson N. Norris, show plants to: (ctr. - right) Miss Phyllis Giardini, nursing service; Miss Gayle Tarpinian and Miss Kathy Fisher, students in the School of Medical Technology.

Understanding and warm greetings given patients by patient service department employees

When a patient enters the Deaconess or any other hospital, he frequently brings with him fears and anxieties about his pending treatment and/or operation. It is important to curb these emotions in order for the patient to relax and, therefore, respond better to his medical care. Patient service is the department at the Deaconess that has the initial responsibility for helping each patient feel comfortable with his forthcoming hospitalization.

Under the direction of Mr. William E. Branson, patient service manager, and Mrs. Erminie Smith, supervisor of the representatives, ten patient service employees admit individuals to the Deaconess. The department is covered seven days a week from 7:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. During the regular weekday hours there are generally five representatives in the admitting division of patient service and at least one is on duty during off hours.

Throughout the patient's hospitalization, a one-to-one ratio is maintained by the patient service representative and the person she admits. The representative tries to visit the patient during his stay at the hospital, handles all relevant business affairs, sees the patient at the time of discharge, and in the case of a subsequent readmission, the representative services his account.

Patient service is much more than an admitting office. Its employees interact daily with practically every department in the hospital but the most frequent contact is with booking and medical record employees, the nursing staff and the unit hostesses.

Since patient service representatives work a 4-day/40-hour week, the office opens at 7:30 a.m. Early mornings are devoted primarily to telephone calls, billing and correspondence. Time-consuming forms such as Medicare, Medicaid, Blue Cross and Workmen's Compensation must all be completed during the early hours. In addition, occasional emergency or observation unit admissions must be processed in the morning.

The booking department sends a daily list of patients scheduled for admission to the patient service office at noon every day. This list, complete with room number, doctor's name and diagnosis, usually grows as the afternoon progresses and occasionally has even doubled during the afternoon's admitting hours.

Although patients scheduled for admission are asked to arrive at the Deaconess between the hours of 1 and 3 p.m., they usually begin to appear shortly after noon. They check in with the patient service coordinator/receptionist who is located in a built-in counter office at the front of the Central 1 corridor. Previously stationed at a temporary desk at the far end of the corridor, the coordinator/receptionist moved to the counter desk in mid-December. The new location is much more convenient for patients who occasionally found the previous arrangement confusing.

When a patient arrives, the coordinator/receptionist records his name and asks him to take a seat in the adjacent waiting room. If the patient was previously hospitalized at NEDH, the receptionist then retrieves his record from the medical record department.

A new waiting room opened in early November to replace a crowded waiting area consisting of the narrow passageway that connects the admitting offices. A window-wall office allows the girl to see patients awaiting admission. This enables her to observe any emergency situations and to summon prompt medical aid if necessary or see that the patient is taken directly to the floor.

The general policy for admissions procedures is "first come - first served." During an admitting interview, a patient service representative takes the patient into her office where, in privacy, she records all pertinent medical, personal and insurance data necessary for the total care of the admittee.

The admitting interview frequently is one of the times when patients express their anxieties about their hospitalization. Patient service representatives deal with questions as simple as *"How's the food?"* and *"When is my operation scheduled?"* They also must tactfully refer questions about the patient's treatment to the attending physician.

Mrs. Artie Alexander, cashier, waits to cash a check for patient service employee, Miss Pat McAdams.

Occasionally during the admission's interview, a patient will express dissatisfaction with the type of room to which he is assigned. In this case, the representative must contact the booking office and, if possible, arrangements are made for another room.

Various laboratory admitting procedures are necessary at the time a patient enters the Deaconess Hospital. For the convenience of patients, a small admitting laboratory adjacent to the new waiting room, is scheduled to open by the end of December. This laboratory is equipped for routine urine and blood analysis and ECG tests as needed. A Coulter Counter Model-S machine, located in the admitting laboratory, is capable of performing seven tests on one blood sample in just 40 seconds.

Ready with their portable file carts and waiting the final "OK" from Patient Service Manager William Branson, patient service employees prepare to settle in an increased number of admitting offices. They are: (l. - r.) Mrs. Cheryl O'Donnell, representative; Miss Mary Ellen Kenny, receptionist/coordinator; ~~Miss~~ Mrs. Liza Fyock, representative; and Miss Patricia Mickola, representative.

Prior to the opening of the admitting laboratory, patients waited until they were in their rooms before a blood and urine sample could be taken. They also had to be escorted to various floors in the Central building for other admittance procedures. After the laboratory opens, results from the admitting tests will reach the floor almost as soon as the patient does.

Before the patient service representative escorts the patient to his assigned room, she places any valuables in the hospital vault. She also gives the patient her personal card so that she can be easily reached if the patient has further questions.

After introducing the patient to the unit hostess and any nurses or employees available when the patient arrives on his unit, the service representative gives the medical record and personal data sheet to the hostess. The patient is then taken to his room and oriented to the various features available for his personal convenience and medical care.

Now that the patient is in his room, the nursing service staff is responsible for his medical care and the easement of any anxieties. The service representative returns to her department where another patient awaits admission to the hospital. This is not the last time, however, that the patient service representative and the patient see each other. Subsequent business and/or social visits are made by the representative who is responsible for all insurance and billing procedures.

Exceptions naturally exist for the general admittance process. If a person arrives in an ambulance and goes directly to a room, the service representative assigned to this admission will try to learn as much as possible about the patient from a relative or friend. If no one is available to answer these questions, the representative must go either by the old medical record — if the patient was previously admitted to NEDH — or go to the floor and interview the individual.

Patients who need immediate medical care and go directly to patient service may be taken directly to their room. This action depends upon the judgment of the patient service representative. If she decides that he is too sick to wait, the admission's interview is done after the patient is in his room where medical attention is available.

The patient service department is responsible for more than admittance procedures. In addition to the ten service representatives, two coordinator/receptionists, Mr. Branson and Mrs. Smith, there are three cashiers, two collectors, one secretary and a clerk-typist.

The three cashiers; Miss Maguerite Kehoe, chief cashier; Mrs. Artie Alexander, and Miss Helen Taylor, process about 95% of the cash routed through the hospital. They handle all out-patient billing and store all financial folders for discharged patients. In addition, they cash personal checks for the convenience of all NEDH employees.

In accounts receivable, the two collectors; Mrs. Dorothy Casale and Mrs. Lillian Morotta; work under the direction of the collection supervisor, Miss Mary Hennessey, who is also Mr. Branson's secretary. They follow up on the financial arrangements made with the patients by the service representatives. If a patient has no insurance coverage, one of the collectors will contact the service representative to determine whether or not it is possible to secure any form of coverage while the patient is still hospitalized.

A bill is mailed to the patient seven days after discharge from the Deaconess. If it remains unpaid, follow-

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Christmas around the world . . .

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try recognizes Christmas as a national holiday, but individual homes and missions celebrate the day with customs similar to those in this country. Santa Claus visits the children on Christmas morning and families attend church either Christmas Eve or morning.

Dr. Himathongkam attended mission schools in Thailand for eight years and remembers the school's recognition of Christmas, "It was a big class event. We decorated the classrooms, tree and all, and on the 24th there was a big party. We brought gifts for a grab bag and together ate a big meal. There of course was church but no classes on December 25th!"

In India, native country of Dr. K. Murthy, fellow in hematology, Christianity is a major minority religion and Hinduism is the major religion. Christmas Eve and the arrival of Santa Claus is a family time, but on December 25, Christian families gather for services and, sometimes, a big party at the churches.

It is summer weather in Argentina when Christmas is celebrated. Before the Christmas Eve festivities, people bustle through the beautifully decorated stores to buy gifts for relatives and friends who will share the family table. At the home of Dr. Arturo Rolla, second year medical resident, preparations include decorating a tree and displaying a nativity scene.

"On the evening of December 24, we gather with friends and relatives for a festive barbecued meal of beef, chicken, turkey or pork accompanied with several salads and sweet cider. Since most of the people in Argentina are Roman Catholic, we go to midnight mass," explains Dr. Rolla.

After mass, the Rolla family frequently visits several churches to see the different nativity scenes. When they arrive home, there is the long-anticipated exchange of gifts brought by Papa Noel. Door-to-door caroling and a party of dancing and singing follow the exchange of presents for many Argentinians.

With the gala festivities over, Christmas Day in Argentina usually is spent quietly at home. On January 6, the Day of Epiphany, there is another exchange of gifts in recognition of the three wise men from the East who went to Bethlehem to honor the infant Jesus.

Posadas and piñatas typify Christmas in Mexico, the home of Dr. Alberto Solano, Joslin fellow. A posada is the enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a place to stay in Bethlehem. The tradition began in the late 16th century when missionaries from Spain arrived in Mexico and taught the Indians the Christmas story.

In Mexico today, posadas are parties held each of nine nights preceding Christmas Day. The party walks around carrying candles, singing, and asking for entrance into other homes. Symbolically they enter the home and then everyone leaves and goes to the next home or apartment. In this way, the group increases in number until finally they reach their final destination and more festivities begin.

"A hot punch is made especially for the posada party where everyone sings and dances. The highlight of the party is when we break the piñata," explains Dr. Solano.

Constructed of clay, the hollow piñata is filled with little gifts, candies and even water for the more adventurous Mexicans. A rope holding the piñata is hung over a tree limb or some high protrusion. This makes it possible to move the piñata and keep it out of the reach of blindfolded individuals who, in turn, try to break open the piñata with a stick and send its surprises showering down on the excited group.

The most important posada is held Christmas Eve with family members and close friends. Gifts are exchanged following a large meal. At the conclusion of these festivities, people flock to their individual churches for religious services.

Electric lights in hand, Dr. and Mrs. Mitsuo Kitahara depict the international custom of decorating a Christmas tree. Mrs. Kitahara wears a kimona, the traditional Japanese ceremonial dress.

Around the world, Christmas is a special time of reverence and joy for Christian people. Although customs may vary in foreign nations, they all share the spiritual quality that unites people in love and hope. A universal celebration, Christmas is a time of togetherness.

Patient service . . .

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up bills are mailed every month. Various form letters requesting payment are then sent out by the collectors and if no correspondence is received from the patient, the collectors have no choice but to refer the billing process to a collection agency. This final step is taken only as a last resort to secure payment to the hospital.

All patient service employees work together to make each patient's hospitalization free of financial and personal worries. They meet every Monday to discuss any problems encountered the previous week and to explore various ways of better serving the patient. The tone of concern emitted by each patient service employee establishes a positive introduction to the Deaconess Hospital.

JUST A THOUGHT:
"With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come."
William Shakespeare

New vacation policy provides more benefits

Deaconess employees who have completed five years of service can look forward to increased vacation benefits beginning January 1, 1972. Individuals who now earn two or three weeks of paid vacation time will receive an additional week after five years of service and a second additional vacation week after 15 years. Until now the vacation policy required ten years of service before an employee earned the first additional vacation week and 25 years for the second additional week.

Individuals who earn four weeks of vacation are less affected by the new vacation policy. They will receive an extra week after ten years and a second additional week after 20 years of service. Higher allotments of paid vacation time are determined according to professional preparation and position responsibility.

New employees begin to earn vacation time on the first day of the month following employment, but may not use this time until they complete six months of service. All paid vacations are accrued, and then granted for the previous months of service.

Deaconess employees are given ten paid legal holidays a year. Those holidays observed during an employee's scheduled vacation will add an extra day to the vacation. Illness or other emergencies that occur during scheduled time off do not extend the vacation period.

New England Deaconess Hospital
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pulse

The New England Deaconess Hospital is a 500-bed complex consisting of the medical office building at One Ten Francis Street, Lahey and Overholt Thoracic Clinics, the Joslin Diabetes Foundation, Inc., the Cancer Research Institute and the Shields Warren Radiation Laboratory. The Deaconess is internationally known for diagnosis, treatment and research in general medicine, brain and chest surgery, cancer and diabetes.

PULSE is published monthly by the Public Relations Department of the New England Deaconess Hospital.

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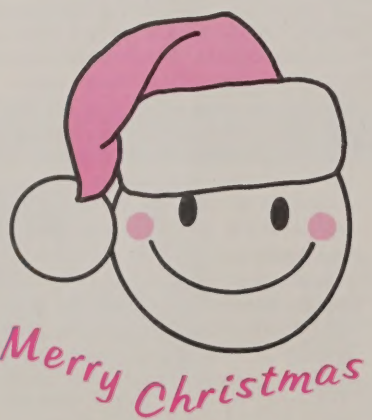

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